A Family’s Ordeal: The Troubling Case of William Preston Clark

American Indian Flags — Authenticating Clark’s Signature
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On the cover
George Catlin painted this miniature portrait of William Preston Clark dressed as Shakespeare’s Iago in 1831. Catlin signed the three-inch square watercolor on the front and back (see page 12). Catlin’s signature with a watercolor brush is different from his signature with pen and ink.
Consider your options for leaving a legacy

In the "Maps As Metaphors" annual meeting brochure, the foundation invites members to "tell their stories" during two oral history workshops. For the last several months, Past President Ron Laycock has been soliciting written histories from all past presidents of the foundation. We believe it is very important to preserve not only the history of the Lewis and Clark Expedition and its diverse stories, but also the foundation's colorful history. It is our legacy.

Every time I hear stories of our members' long-term commitment to the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail, their passion for the expedition's stories and their dedication to the foundation, I am amazed and humbled. Many of you have been working on the trail for 20, 30 or even 40 years!

As we reflect on the years leading up to the bicentennial and the legacy just beginning to be realized, I hope you will reflect on your own Lewis and Clark legacy.

- Think about what sparked your interest those many years ago and what turned it into a lifelong passion.
- Reflect on the many ways you have served, and your part in the wonderful commemorative bicentennial events planned and executed along the trail.
- Ponder the tremendous difference you have made in your individual communities and the sense of pride we share nationwide.
- Who will take care of the trail and the foundation in the coming years if not us? We each can make it our personal legacy to ensure that the trail is healthy and its stories and programs preserved for our grandchildren's children. By making a "planned gift" to the foundation, we can demonstrate our belief in its work and commitment to this mission. Ladd and I believe strongly in planned giving, and have acted to ensure the foundation is remembered in our wills. Longtime member Bob Shattuck left the foundation insurance policies that provide monetary grants to accomplish great things along the trail.

One of the easiest ways to leave a planned gift to the foundation is through a Totten Trust or "payable-on-death" bank account, government bond or individual retirement account. The donor names the foundation on the ownership document (such as the registration card for a bank account) and the foundation will inherit the property upon his/her death. The donor retains control of his/her property and can change the beneficiary (payee) at any time. Upon the donor's death, the property is transferred directly to the foundation outside of probate. If a "payable on death" designation has been added to a joint account, it generally will take effect when the second spouse dies.

Of course there are many other ways to leave a planned gift to the foundation—through family trusts, individual wills and insurance policies like Bob Shattuck's gift. It is not important what form the gift takes, but that the commitment leaves a personal legacy that perpetuates the work of the foundation along the trail.

Think about your passion ... and how the foundation will be igniting that passion years from now because you cared enough to plan your personal legacy for the trail. Like Bob, your hard work and commitment can live on, not only in an oral or written history, but also in a tangible legacy for future generations. Join me as we continue to build for the future.

"The Deep End is Where the Fun Happens!"

-Karen Seaberg
President, LCTHF
2008 LCTHF Volunteer Projects

July 15-17, 2008
August 26-28, 2008
Heritage Resource Monitoring
Lolo Motorway, Idaho
Volunteers will assist the USDA Forest Service in a resource protection project on the Lolo Motorway, which will include campsite monitoring and campsite cleanup. The work will take place from a base camp on the Motorway. The Forest Service will provide meals and transportation to the Motorway from the Powell Ranger Station on Highway 12 near the Montana-Idaho border. Volunteers need to provide their own tents, bedding and a variety of weather-appropriate clothing. No experience or skills are required. Nine volunteers needed.

August 14-15, 2008
Pulling Russian knapweed
Pablo Island – Missouri River, Montana
Volunteers will pull Russian knapweed on this 15-acre island in the Missouri River. They will meet in Big Sandy, Montana, at 9 a.m. on August 14. The Bureau of Land Management will provide equipment including gloves, tools and drinking water. The LCTHF will provide meals and snacks. The project will conclude by 3 p.m. on August 15. Volunteers will spend the night at a recreation site along the river. They should bring their own tents, sleeping bags, hiking boots, shoes that can get wet in transporting items from the boat to the island, a hat, long-sleeved shirts, long pants and sunscreen. Volunteers must be able to stand for several hours at a time, and possess the strength and agility to use shovels and pry bars, and pull weeds. This project could be delayed a day if the weather is inclement so plan accordingly. Ten volunteers needed.

August 15-September 15, 2008
Campsite Monitoring
Upper Missouri River, Montana
Volunteers will monitor and record data at about 40 modern-day campsites on the upper Missouri River. The Bureau of Land Management manages about 120 sites along the river. LCTHF volunteers will monitor a third of the campsites each year. Volunteers will receive training from the Bureau of Land Management prior to embarking on this unsupervised project for several days during the listed time period. The LCTHF and the Bureau of Land Management will provide canoes, shuttle service and a per diem. Volunteers need to provide their own tents, bedding and a variety of weather-appropriate clothing. One or two groups of volunteers needed.

September 2-5, 2008
Pulling salt cedar
Upper Missouri River, Montana
Volunteers will assist the Bureau of Land Management in pulling saltcedar shoots from drainages along a 50-mile stretch of the upper Missouri River. This three-night, four-day trip will involve hard physical labor including canoe rowing and weed pulling from dawn to dusk each day. Volunteers must be able to handle a canoe. The work crew will carpool from Lewistown to Kipp Recreation Area. The Bureau of Land Management will provide transportation from Kipp to McClellan Ferry, where the crew will get on the river. On the fourth day, the crew will arrive at Kipp and carpool back to Lewistown. This trip provides the opportunity to float a little-traveled portion of the upper Missouri River, which is rich in Lewis and Clark Expedition history, and includes Chief Joseph Crossing and history from the steamboat era. The Bureau of Land Management and LCTHF will provide canoes, equipment, drinking water and meals. Volunteers must provide their own tents, sleeping bags, hiking boots, shoes that can get wet, a hat, long-sleeved shirts, long pants and sunscreen. This project could be delayed a day if the weather is inclement so plan accordingly. Nine volunteers needed, including one camp cook who will proceed ahead of the work crew with a Bureau of Land Management crew to prepare camp and meals.

For information or to sign up for a project, contact: Wendy Raney at wraney@lewisandclark.org.
I read with interest Erika Karuzas's article on retracing the Lolo Trail (WPO, February 2008). Like many others, I attempted such a journey, backpacking approximately 100 miles from east to west, culminating in Weippe, Idaho, in the summer of 1991. I tried to research the route prior to my departure, talking with Forest Service personnel at the Lolo Ranger Station, purchasing maps, and reading the applicable parts of Lewis and Clark's journals along with a couple of marginally relevant articles in Idaho History and other publications. The aggregate of all these sources was not very helpful in pinpointing the trail. Karuzas gives logical reasons why this would be the case!

At the completion of our trek (my son and a friend accompanied me), we were fortunate to make the acquaintance of Norm Steadman, a longtime Forest Service employee in the Clearwater National Forest and mayor of Weippe. Steadman has more knowledge of the Lolo Trail and of Lewis and Clark in that area than any person I know. It would have been helpful to Karuzas if she had consulted with him.

Two additional Lolo Trail "gurus" Karuzas might have consulted are Steve Russell and Lyn Laughy. Russell spent many years researching the Bird-Trux wagon route, which Karuzas alludes to but does not name. This gave him an excellent foundation for the subsequent research he did on the Lolo Trail route. Much of this is available in Hike Lewis and Clark's Idaho (2002), which Russell co-authored with Mary Aegerter. Laughy, who was raised in the area and now lives close to Weippe, included much information on the Lolo Trail in his fine book, Clearwater Country (1999), which he co-authored with his wife, Borg Hendrickson.

I am happy to see We Proceeded On giving attention to the Lolo Trail question. My 1991 backpack trip stimulated me to establish a better understanding of Lewis and Clark's route. I found it frustrating, as a professional historian, that some of the leading members of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation in Idaho seemed to have little interest in identifying the route. Indeed, one such member even wrote me that he did not wish to see the trail better identified as this would bring too many people to visit and would "spoil it!"

Karuzas articulates sensible reasons why we will never be able to locate with precision the route of the Corps of Discovery over the Lolo Trail. I do believe, however, that we can be pretty certain of some segments if we avail ourselves of the combined resources of Steadman, Russell and Laughy.

James Hendrix
Cashiers, N.C.

"Retracing the Lolo Trail" by Erika Karuzas (WPO, February 2008) leads readers to conclude that very little of the original Indian trail across the Bitterroots is now visible, and that much of what remains is "braided" and on vague and only generalized locations.

A number of first-hand historical accounts of this trail were published, many for the first time, in 2003 by the University of Idaho Library in a 288-page book, In Nez Perce Country: Accounts of the Bitterroots and the Clearwater After Lewis and Clark. A great many of these accounts point to a visible, largely single-track route in existence and under continual use.

Over the past 10 or so years, Steve Russell and Gene and Mollie Eastman have conducted extensive field research involving thousands of hours of difficult work. While they don't always agree on trail locations, both sets of research conclude that much of the Lolo Trail is single track, visible and can be located.

The survival of ancient trails is not a situation unique to the Lolo Trail. Large segments of the Southern Nez Perce Trail, sometimes called the Camping Trail, also are visible. This trail, leading east from the South Fork of the Clearwater River, was used by large numbers of Nez Perce on horseback as late as 1897.

The Karuzas article unfortunately plays into the hands of those who believe that since ancient trails cannot be located, there is little need to worry about protecting them. Much of the Lolo
Trail has been located with considerable specificity. The real debate ought to be about how to manage it, and specifically, whether to set it aside as a museum piece, or allow and even encourage horse and foot traffic as an alternate way of guaranteeing the trail's survival.

DENNIS BAIRD
Moscow, Idaho

"Retracing the Lolo Trail" (WPO, February 2008) is an interesting article. However, I cannot understand Erika Karuzas ignoring the work that Ralph Space produced in 1970, *The Lolo Trail, A History of Events Connected with the Lolo Trail Since Lewis and Clark*.

I am well aware that since the 1970s, we have come into the age of satellite imagery and other technological marvels, but to totally ignore the work of a man who essentially lived and worked in the area since the 1920s seems to be more than a little short sighted.

HENRY H. CHASE, JR.
Huntsville, Ala.

"Retracing the Lolo Trail" (WPO, February 2008) leads one to believe that the trail has all but disappeared on the ground when, in fact, most of the single-path trail is a deeply worn ditch in places and still can be found. Most of Lewis and Clark's trail in this area has been identified by research dating back to 1915. Only a few lost segments of the trail remain to be identified.

I was a game warden on the Lolo Trail from 1973 to 1993 and have spent 10 years researching the historical records and the physical trail on the ground. (Gene and Mollie Eastman, *Bitterroot Crossing, Lewis & Clark Across The Lolo Trail*)

The Nez Perce Lolo Trail is 80 miles from Musselshell Meadows to Lolo Pass. The Forest Service maintains 17.6 miles of trail, 51.9 miles is not maintained and 10.8 miles is road, including logging roads. The Forest Service has added seven miles of trail for a total of 87 miles. I have found just .8 miles of braided (to branch and rejoin producing a netlike pattern) trail along the original 80 miles of the 1877 Nez Perce Lolo Trail.

I generally found the braided trail segments on open ridges, not in heavy timber. Here, thousands of sheep in the 1920s traveled side-by-side and likely created some of the braided trail. Fires only enhanced the well-worn trail ditch.

I have found that the Nez Perce Lolo Trail matches the 1911 U.S. Geological Survey topographical map and the 1915 U.S. Forest Service map, with no evidence that the historic Nez Perce Lolo Trail has changed location. Ralph Space also found this to be true in 1970 and wrote in *The Lolo Trail, A History of Events Connected with the Lolo Trail Since Lewis and Clark*: "Joseph's band consisted of about 250 men, about 450 women and children and two thousand head of horses... Trees did fall across it and since no one was responsible for keeping it open it became clogged with windfalls. But its route remained practically unchanged from 1866 until it was replaced by a road in 1935, a period of 69 years."

The Nez Perce Lolo Trail and the path followed by the Corps of Discovery often are one and the same in the Lolo Trail system. Both trails have not moved and can be dated to 1866 by blazed trees. They both have been formed through use over hundreds of years. However, one to two miles of the unmaintained historic trail tread is becoming more difficult to follow on north-facing slopes, with heavy undergrowth or where logging activity has occurred. I have not found any evidence that the historic Nez Perce Lolo Trail has changed locations from 1877 due to fires, tree windfalls or other natural causes.

The Lewis and Clark portion of the Lolo Trail still exists for most of the way from Lolo Pass to the western border of the Clearwater National Forest. Along the Hungry Creek portion of Lewis and Clark's trail, the Indians avoided the brush-choked creek bottom and traveled 100 to 200 yards above the creek in the timber for most of the way. Lewis wrote on September 19, 1805, "the road was excessively dangerous along this creek being a narrow rocky path generally on the side of steep precipice..." (Moulton, vol. 5, p. 215) This trail is well defined on the ground and portions can be seen in 1932 aerial photos. The trail still can be followed today, though it is very challenging. It probably was a game trail in 1805 and still is maintained by elk, moose and deer. The Corps of Discovery, leading horses, had to walk around many of the fallen trees between Six-bit and Dollar creeks on September 29, 1805, yet today there is only one single path on this ridge.

GENE EASTMAN
Weippe, Idaho

"Retracing the Lolo Trail" by Erika Karuzas (WPO, February 2008) was misleading. Her article led the reader to believe that the trail traveled by the Corps of Discovery no longer exists.

She failed to expand on the primary-source documents (Lewis and Clark's journals), referring only briefly to two of Joseph Whitehouse's journal entries. Whitehouse wrote very little the entire journey, with few worthwhile route descriptions. However, both Clark and Lewis wrote more than 2,600 words describing the route from Travelers' Rest to the Indian villages at Weippe, in addition to providing compass bearings and distances. Clark drew detailed maps of the route, which when enlarged, can be placed over modern topographical maps to get a very accurate overview of the historic route.

I had first-hand experience tracing the trail in 2004 while backpacking with Gene Eastman. Armed with a copy of the original 1866 Byrd-Truax Expedition map, Clark's maps and the journals, we were able to match our route with Lewis and Clark's. As we walked and followed the trail, the journal descriptions unfolded before us. We matched our path to theirs more than 90 percent of the time. It was difficult to follow the trail in areas that had been altered by logging activity, but by using information in the journals, we were able to reconnect to clear trail tread beyond the logged areas, sort of like connecting the dots. I took more than 800 photos along this route, which includes hundreds of culturally modified (peeled) trees, many of which were labeled with scientific reference numbers. Often we encountered a well-packed trail nearly two feet deep and void of vegetation. Sometimes we had to get on our hands and knees to clearly see the trail under the shroud of cover and match it to Clark's compass and route description.

Karuzas stated that fires "play a significant role in the creation,
destruction and redirection of trails.”

Fires actually will burn any deadfall on a trail and any vegetation crowding it. This often unveils a trail by removing its hidden curtain.

We must not forget that the trail traveled by the Corp of Discovery had been used repeatedly by large bands of Indians traveling to and from the buffalo hunting grounds. A trail packed by the heavy weight of horses and the pounding of their hooves causes the soil to become extremely dense. The impacts of grazing animals on the ground are minimal compared to the evidence of thousands of horses. Grazing animals wandered all over, foraging for food and searching for water, which is much different from the straight path Indians followed to reach the buffalo of the plains.

I hope the readers of the article aren’t misled to believe the trail route no longer exists and therefore is not in need of preservation. Knowing where an event took place is vital to our history. To grasp the hardships and emotional triumphs of Lewis and Clark, it is important to be able to see and walk where they did. It is in these sacred moments that one feels connected to them, providing a deeper understanding not only of Lewis and Clark, but also of one’s own self. The evidence must be left in place.

I thank Editor Wendy Raney for including The National Trail System Act with the article. The act’s purpose being “…the protection of the historic route and its historic remnants and artifacts for public use and enjoyment.”

There is no historian, researcher or modern-day explorer who expects to find moccasin tracks left behind, but many expect to find large, intact sections of trail. It is not difficult to protect an area 100 feet wide on both sides of the route, when other areas in this country are easily protected and contain far more acreage than the Lolo Trail.

NORM MILLER
Livingston, Mont.

Depression misunderstood

With all the serious and urgent problems facing the world in 2008, I am a bit reluctant to dive back into the teapot tempest that is the ongoing debate over Meriwether Lewis’s death almost two centuries ago. There is a much bigger question involved than the fate of one explorer, however illustrious: What is the nature of depression and how should society view people who suffer from it?

In a lengthy letter of refutation (wPo, February 2008) by VerLynn Kneffl to statements by Glen Kirkpatrick (wPo, November 2007), who affirmed that Lewis committed suicide, reader Kneffl offered the following argument: “The after-the-fact construction of Lewis depicts him as dark and melancholy, yet his journals reveal him as a man of great intelligence, determination and humor.”

Why, I ask, the “yet”? Kneffl, like so many others, appears to assume that a person suffering from depression would not or could not be a person “of great intelligence, determination and humor.”

This is a medieval or, at best, pre-World War II idea of what depression means.

Some of history’s greatest minds have suffered from what is now labeled clinically as depression. Abraham Lincoln’s melancholia during the Civil War is well attested to; the English novelist Charles Dickens often was paralyzed by symptoms of what he called “the black hand.”

Mark Twain, a vigorous intellect and frontier traveler, likewise wrestled with depression for long periods.

Anyone who has dealt with depression themselves, or has a family member who suffers from it, knows that, whatever its biological basis, the condition is intimately bound up with the individual’s changing life experience. Though depression can stifle imagination and initiative, it does not at all preclude periods of great creativity and bold action; at times it may even spark them.

Every forward-thinking person should reject the idea that Meriwether Lewis could not have been both a courageous explorer and a victim of clinical depression, up to and including suicidal episodes. Clinging to outdated notions about mental illness is not a way to honor Lewis’s memory.

MARK CHALKLEY
Baltimore, Md.

Iron boat did not “fill” with water

Having just read H. Carl Camp’s “The Corps of Discovery: Improvisers Extraordinaire” (wPo, February 2008), I must disagree with him on his version of how the iron boat failed. Any student of Lewis and Clark’s journals knows all about the events leading up to the failure of Lewis’s “Experiment,” including the comments of Joseph Whitehouse, “She leaked some,” and John Ordway “it leaked considerable.” Nowhere in the journals does it say or suggest anything about the boat “eventually filling with water,” as Camp wrote.

According to my dictionaries, the word “fill” means “to occupy the whole available space or capacity of.”

If Camp is suggesting that the iron boat “filled with water,” that is, with water right up to the gunwales, then why was it necessary for Lewis to order her to be “sunk in the water,” to soften the hides covering the iron frame, if she already was completely submerged?

There is no denying that the iron boat was a failure due to the absence of pine pitch to seal the seams. Unfortunately, far too many writers of the Lewis and Clark story use their own interpretations to override what is plainly stated in the journals.

Let’s proceed on!

JOHN L. STONE
Townsend, Mont.

REJOINDER FROM THE AUTHOR:

I commend John L. Stoner, he of sharp eyes, for taking me to task over my characterization of the failure of Lewis’s “iron boat.” The craft “leaked considerably,” according to John Ordway, but it was not until Lewis ordered the “Experiment” to be sunk in the water overnight to soften the hull’s hide covering in advance of its dismantlement the next day that the boat “eventually filled [completely] with water.”

I stand corrected and pledge to be more careful in my interpretation and use of expedition source materials.

We are all mere mortals and prone to err from time to time. As “Keepers of the Story” we are obligated to help one another as best we can and proceed on.

H. CARL CAMP
Omaha, Neb.

EDITOR’S NOTE

The LC!THF has conducted volunteer monitoring projects twice a year on the Lolo Motorway since 2004. Erika Karuzas has been a dedicated participant in each of the projects, which promote resource protection.
Shannon Trail offers fun and adventure

The award-winning Shannon Trail organization was founded in 2001. It unites 16 communities and the Ponca and Santee Sioux nations in a common goal—attracting visitors to the largely undiscovered historic and scenic treasures of the segment of the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail where Private George Shannon, the youngest member of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, was lost for 16 days.

WANTED!

Private George Shannon
Lost in August of 1804

Wanted posters invite visitors to earn their choice of an original limited-edition print of Shannon or an "antique" map by finding life-size chainsaw statues of Shannon. The statues are in participating communities along the 240-mile trail, artfully displayed among native plants, wildlife carvings, national and state flags and the distinctive Shannon flag. An added incentive encourages visitors to compete in a drawing for a $500 reward.

A National Park Service grant and donations from local banks helped fund 16 wayside signs commemorating Shannon's life. Geocache sites are available along the trail and the Heartland Experience Group offers agritourism, on-the-farm experiences. A life-size mannequin in period clothing, affectionately referred to as "Shannon the Mannequin," is displayed at area businesses and state parks where visitors may sign up for free one-day passes to area parks and the Ashfall Fossil Beds. A miniature version of the expedition keelboat is on display in an area museum. This year, Shannon Trail is sponsoring motor coach tours of the trail to coincide with the Knox and Cedar County Fairs and other local events.

Shannon Trail was funded by grants from the National Park Service, the Peter Kiewit Foundation, the Nebraska Humanities Council, the Nebraska Arts Council, the Nebraska Division of Tourism, the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum Greenspace Program, the Knox County Visitors Committee, Great Plains Communications, local banks, a private donor and in-kind contributions from the communities involved. Shannon Trail has sponsored benefit concerts and original Shannon musicals. The organization also has sold limited-edition Shannon prints, T-shirts and their "Voices Of The Trail" CD.

In 2006, the Northeast Nebraska Resource and Development Agency nominated Shannon Trail to be a presenter at the 2006 National Tourism Extension Conference. Interpretive Specialist Karla V. Sigala noted, "The George Shannon Trail organization has been monumentally effective in bringing together people from 16 communities and two American Indian Tribes in a combined effort to tell the story of the Lewis and Clark Expedition through the eyes of Pvt. George Shannon. This is an example to other communities across the country and they should be recognized for their efforts."

You are invited to visit the Shannon Trail Web site at www.shannontrail.com. President Laurie Larsen may be reached at The Shannon Trail Promoters, c/o Laurie Larsen, President, Box 489, Bloomfield, NE, 68718, (402) 373-2663 or at lklassen_72@gpcom.net.

VERLYNN KEEFEL
Crofton, Neb.

EDITOR'S NOTE

The editor would like to apologize to WPO readers and A. Fraser Siehl for errors inadvertently inserted into the endnotes of Siehl's article, "The Eyes of 'St. Peter'" (WPO, November 2007) during the editing process.

Note 1 should have read, "Moulton's footnote to this entry says of St. Peter, 'Apparently Cruzatte, with terminology used also by Ordway.'"

Note 24 should have read, "Moulton noted that both Ordway and Gass seemed to believe that Cruzatte was entirely ignorant of having shot Lewis."

I apologize for any confusion these errors caused. My deepest thanks go to the author for his understanding.

WENDY M. RANEY

WPO welcomes letters. We may edit them for length, accuracy, clarity and civility. Send them to c/o Editor, WPO, P.O. Box 3434, Great Falls, MT 59403 (e-mail wpo@lewisandclark.org). The deadline for letters to be published in the August 2008 issue of WPO is June 20.

For a limited-time you can purchase a lifetime membership with the LCHTF to establish a lifelong connection with the Foundation while demonstrating your commitment to preserving the Lewis and Clark Expedition Trail.

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Don't Miss Out!
A FAMILY'S ORDEAL:  
THE TROUBLING CASE OF WILLIAM PRESTON CLARK

A look at the life of William Clark's second-born son offers a rare glimpse into the captain's private life

BY WILLIAM E. FOLEY

William Clark embarked upon grand adventures and rubbed elbows with famous and powerful people but, for him, family always came first. It was a principle he learned at his parents' knees and never forsook. As a young man he was attentive to the wishes of his mother and father, and when his famed older brother George Rogers Clark fell on hard times, he rushed to the rescue. The premature deaths of his two wives made him the primary caregiver for his children. He delighted in their achievements and once confided to his son George, "my children are now my first consideration and to see them do well [will] be a consolation in my old age not to be equaled by any other events." When they stumbled, he shared their disappointment and pain and stood ready to lend a helping hand.

There was sadness aplenty: along with life's normal disappointments and difficulties, William Clark had to bury two spouses and three children, and one of his surviving sons, William Preston Clark, battled mysterious demons that eventually landed him in a Kentucky asylum. While the elder Clark endured more than his share of heartbreak and sorrow, he guarded his privacy and seldom mentioned such matters outside the inner family circle. In contrast with his partner Meriwether Lewis, whose tragic and untimely death subjected his personal problems to endless scrutiny, William Clark's private life largely escaped public notice.

The poignant story of his second born, William Preston Clark, affords a rare opportunity for parting the curtain to the famed explorer's private world and revealing his fatherly qualities at work. Family letters show that William Preston's sometimes-erratic behavior and his ever-changing fortunes were matters of grave concern and a regular topic of conversation. His life was marked with ups and downs and tinged with tragedy. During the brief span of 29 years he witnessed history-making events at his father's side, worked as a St. Louis storekeeper, studied at the University of Virginia, read law at Harvard, edited a literary and commercial journal and traveled as far west as the famed landmark known to overland travelers as Independence Rock, yet throughout most of his adult years he struggled unsuccessfully to find his way. As bright as any of the celebrated explorer's children, William Preston Clark dabbled in any number of ventures, always with the elder Clark's encouragement and assistance, but lasting success somehow eluded him.
This illustration of William Preston Clark was published in *Gateway Families*, by Christy Hewes Bond in 1994. The portrait has long been mistakenly identified as his father, William Clark. The younger Clark was born September 10, 1811, in St. Louis and his father described him as "a great rough red headed fellow."
Contemporary sources make it clear that in the final years of his relatively short life, William Preston Clark had become addicted to alcohol. Heavy drinking was commonplace on the American frontier, and the Clark family was second to none in its appreciation for good liquor. While excessive drinking contributed to George Rogers Clark’s precipitous decline, his brother William, who was equally fond of strong spirits, escaped the ravages of alcoholism. In jest, his stepson William Radford once confided that if they should get together, “I think you would have to pay my grog expences, if you are as fond of licre [liquor] as formerly.”

Tragically, William Preston Clark was destined to experience his uncle’s fate rather than his father’s, but a fondness for the bottle may not have been the sole cause of his downfall. To the contrary, it seems likely that he also suffered from the ravages of chronic malaria, made worse by his failure to take the prescribed medications when he was drinking heavily. Ague and fevers were endemic to the southern and western frontiers, and Clark’s symptoms, gleaned from family letters and firsthand observations, lend credence to a diagnosis of malaria: among those mentioned were the recurring fevers that began at an early age, fatigue, loss of appetite, fits, seizures, being laid on his back and, near the end of his life, psychosis. The lethal combination of alcoholism and malaria ultimately condemned him to a lunatic asylum and an early death. Given the stigmas associated with insanity and drunkenness, it is little wonder that the family chose to keep his condition under wraps.

Named for his father’s close friend and brother-in-law Major William Preston, William Preston Clark was born in St. Louis on September 10, 1811. Four days after the happy event, the proud new father informed his brother Jonathan, “I cant Conclude without mentioning to you that I have another Son, a great rough red headed fellow: ...” Initially the boy appeared hale and hearty, a promising contrast with his sickly older brother Meriwether Lewis Clark, but later those roles would be reversed. William’s younger siblings Mary Margaret, George Rogers Hancock, John Julius, Thomas Jefferson Kearny, and Edmund joined the growing Clark brood in the years that followed. William Clark’s first wife and young William’s mother, Judith (Julia) Hancock, bore the first five of his children. Upon her unfortunate death in 1820, likely to breast cancer, Clark married Harriet Kennerly Radford, Julia’s girlhood friend and cousin, who bore him two sons. 6

Ever mindful of his children’s welfare, William Clark recognized their potential and understood their shortcomings. Such was the case with William Preston whom he candidly evaluated in a letter to Thomas Jefferson: “My Secon Son William is 14 years of age. Boath Sprightly with good Capacity, deficient in application.” Though he bore a striking physical resemblance to his well-known father, he failed to inherit his dad’s legendary perseverance and resolve. A youthful aversion to work and intermittent bouts of sickness kept the talented lad from realizing his potential or measuring up to family expectations, notwithstanding the numerous opportunities that came his way.

Growing up in the Clark household was far from ordinary. Visiting Indian delegations, foreign dignitaries, and local citizens of all stripes regularly paraded through his father’s St. Louis office. William was listed at age six as a witness for the signing of a treaty with the Quapaw Indians. Family travels took him to more than his share of distant places. Following the outbreak of the War of 1812, General Clark spirited his wife and children east out of harm’s way. Young William occasionally visited his kin in Virginia, and as a teenager he joined the hordes that flocked into the federal capital to witness President Andrew Jackson’s raucous 1829 inauguration where he likely met Old Hickory in person. The following year he traveled up the Missouri for his father to summon the Nakota Sioux and Omahas to a tribal council at Prairie du Chien.

William also experienced an uncommon amount of tragedy and loss during his formative years. His beloved mother died when he was only eight years old, and less than two years later his younger sister Mary Margaret succumbed to a childhood illness. In those difficult times his father steadfastly looked after him and his brothers. The devoted parent amused his children with plays and circuses, treated them to fruit and cakes, and took time away from his crowded public schedule for kite flying. When the elder Clark remarried, his new wife Harriet helped fill the void left by Julia’s untimely death. She was by all accounts a loving and caring wife and mother who embraced the children as her own, and they reciprocated in kind. No exception, William expressed concern and urged his “ma” to exercise more and take less magnesia when her health began to fail.

Harriet encouraged the boys to pursue their interests, and in all likelihood she, who like Julia was an accomplished pianist and musician, helped cultivate young William’s musical talents. His father reported that William was learning to play the violin and the flute, and
The following inscription appears on this 1825 lithograph: "View of the Great Treaty Held at Prairie du Chien, September 1825, at which upward's of 5000 Indian Warriors of the Chippewas, Sioux, Sacs & Foxes, Winnebagoes, Pottowatomies, Mononies, Ioways & Ottowas tribes were present; Gov. Lewis Cass of Michigan and William Clark of Missouri, Commissioners on the part of the United States."

Artist James Otto Lewis accompanied Lewis Cass and others to treaty conferences in the Midwest from 1825 to 1833. William Preston Clark, who was not quite 15, attended this council with his father.

While it is not clear how far he advanced, at the time of his death he retained among his possessions a pearl inlaid violin with bow, an ebony flute, a pearl inlaid guitar, and a collection of instrumental and choral music.10

The Clarks valued education above all, and William Clark was determined that his children would receive proper schooling.11 He helped secure Meriwether Lewis Clark an appointment to West Point and arranged for his other sons to take classes in St. Louis, Kentucky and the East. It was a matter of no little concern when his second-born initially showed little interest in schoolwork. Perhaps in an effort to give his underperforming son some personal attention, Clark took him along to the grand Indian council at Prairie du Chien in the summer of 1825.12

When that failed to have the desired effect, he sent the 15-year-old to New York to continue his studies with the hope that a change of schools and scenery might do the trick. Letters from there were not encouraging. William reported that he was suffering from ague, as malaria often was called, unhappy in his studies and desired to return home. His exasperated father attributed his illness, anguish and lethargy to a dislike of close application, but they were more likely a product of his malarial fevers. Uncertain about how to respond to his son's stresses, the senior Clark pondered sending him to Bardstown in Kentucky where the schools had a good reputation and his Kentucky relatives would be closer at hand. He also urged Lewis to write his younger brother and offer a few words of encouragement.13

Despite his sickness and discontent, young William managed to stick it out in New York until the school term...
ended in the spring of 1827. Significantly, when he applied himself he performed quite well. He returned to St. Louis intent upon going into business, but his father had little confidence that he would succeed and pledged not to support any such venture. Following his homecoming, William remained unwell, but by then physicians in St. Louis would have recognized his malarial symptoms and prescribed quinine or its botanic predecessor, cinchona bark. Such treatments would explain his improving health and the increased industriousness and engagement that his father observed. Encouraged by those signs, he reconsidered and arranged for his son’s employment as a clerk in a store that George Kennely opened in Clark’s new two-story brick building on Main Street. The teenager’s conduct momentarily gave his father reason for optimism: “Your brother William I am in hopes will make a substantial merchant, he is attentive & industrious with correct calculations, requiring one important quality, contentment of situation, which I hope he will possess in time.”

William dashed his father’s hopes when he succumbed (as he put it) to a store boy’s temptations “to dissipate, frolic, gamble, cheat their employers, idle their time, spend money drink, smoke &c&c.” He later confided to his brother George, “I had an idea at one time of becoming a merchant & went into a store, but soon found out the vices I had fallen into & thank my god that I had the good sense to make a timely retreat.” At the youthful age of 16 William had started drinking. Eager to rescue his son from boredom and temptation, General Clark dispatched him to New Orleans on an errand to secure compensation owed the family for the services of slaves who had been hired out on a steamboat. During his return trip home, William escaped injury when the boiler of the vessel on which he was a passenger exploded, and with nary a thought for his own safety, he rushed to render assistance to some of the badly burned casualties.

In search of a new career, William next contemplated following Lewis to West Point, but his older brother was justifiably dubious about his prospects at the military academy. After casting that idea aside, the talented yet unpredictable 19-year-old appears to have momentarily become smitten with the theater. In 1831, artist George Catlin painted a miniature portrait of him dressed as Shakespeare’s Iago. The Clarks often attended plays, so it would not have been surprising if William toyed with the idea of becoming an actor. He was in Philadelphia at the time, and Shakespeare’s plays regularly were staged there. It is even possible that family connections enabled him to land the villain’s role in a local production of Othello. If so, his theatrical career was yet another of his fleeting fancies, and soon thereafter the restless young Clark set out for the University of Virginia determined to pursue a career in law. “I study Law,” he wrote his father, “with the expectation of depending on it as a profession to support me hereafter in life & not as a mere accomplishment.” While enroute to Charlottesville, he attended business that his father had entrusted to his care.

His matriculation at Jefferson’s university gave him a burst of renewed energy. The boy who had always been something of a laggard now counseled his younger brother George “you must lay aside all childish sports & idleness & commence to study in earnest, by assiduous attention to study,” urging him to prepare himself in Latin, mathematics and French. “They study here night & day. I rise at 5 in the morning & go to bed never before 12 or 1 o’clock,” he informed his brother. Though he may have exaggerated for effect, young William momentarily seemed to have found himself. At the end of the school year he journeyed back to St. Louis for a summer break. The return of his fevers signaled a relapse in his malarial symptoms that would have necessitated new doses of quinine. He soon was well enough to join members of his family for Sunday services at Christ Church Episcopal in gratitude for his recovery and for Meriwether Lewis Clark’s safe return from the Black Hawk War.

After a year at the University of Virginia, William headed to Harvard to read law in the fall of 1832. The nation’s oldest college, located in the small town of Cambridge, Massachusetts, had an enrollment of 275 undergraduates, 45 law students and an unspecified number of divinity students. He found society in nearby Boston...
more cultivated than in St. Louis "& very particular as to who they receive within its pale," but noted with some pride, "I have been initiated into this sanctuary & some of its choice blessings have been showered on me, in the shape of tea & dancing parties, dinners &c." Blackstone and Kent momentarily superseded all such delights as he launched his studies under some of America's preeminent legal scholars including Justice Joseph Story and Royall Professor John Ashmun. By his accounting he was well pleased with the school, and reassured family members that he was applying himself "pretty closely" to his studies in spite of the opportunities for socializing available to him. While the convivial young scholar undoubtedly found time for sharing a dram with his fellow students, his stints in Charlottesville and Cambridge appear to have borne fruit.20

His estate inventory gives evidence of a person of intellectual curiosity and academic accomplishment. His nearly 700-volume library—impressive by any standard—contained classical and modern works including titles by Homer, Plutarch, Shakespeare, Milton, Locke, Burns, Byron and Scott, among a host of others. He continued acquiring books until shortly before his death. Washington Irving's Astoria (1836) and Charles Dickens's Nicholas Nickleby (1838) are two examples. An array of books on history, geography, law, botany, travel, medicine and self-help further illustrate the breadth of William's interests. For diversion he could always turn to Chess Made Easy or Hoyle's Games. His ownership of French grammar and lesson books, a French dictionary and numerous works in French, including the whimsical farces of the playwright Molière, suggest that he possessed a reading knowledge of that language. He also accumulated a collection of sculpture, engravings and paintings, including four framed watercolors by the western artist Peter Rindisbacher.21

Following the conclusion of his studies at Harvard, William returned to St. Louis sometime in 1833. When Meriwether Lewis Clark announced his pending nuptials to Abby Churchill in Kentucky, William was the only family member in St. Louis willing to brave the winter weather on short notice to attend the ceremonies, but despite his best efforts, he failed to arrive in time for the ceremony. While in Kentucky, he traveled to Paducah, a town founded by his father, where he proclaimed himself "over head and ears in business." Having sold lots worth $2,000 and laid out a town in the lower part of the reserve, he returned to St. Louis in good spirits and pleased with his accomplishments.22

He continued to immerse himself in the affairs of Paducah, but there are hints that he had regressed to his youthful follies. His father, never troubled by the practice of nepotism, found a position for him in the Indian Office, notwithstanding the apparent reservations of members of his agency, including General John Ruland who, by young William's own reckoning, had little confidence in his judgment. William informed his father that he was reading law with St. Louis attorney Beverly Allen preparatory to obtaining a license to practice in Missouri, but felt it necessary to add, "I may be indolent but I can also be industrious." As if to underscore the point, he purchased the St. Louis Commercial Bulletin, a publication devoted to commerce and literature, and assumed the dual posts of editor and proprietor. A Missouri Argus account announcing the sale reported that William's friends were optimistic about his chances, but within two years he sold his interest in the newspaper and abandoned his foray into journalism.23

Following his older brother Lewis's election to the Missouri General Assembly, William occasionally went with him to Jefferson City to assist with his legislative business. He was well enough in March of 1837 to declare as a candidate for alderman from St. Louis's 3rd Ward.
While he failed to win, he made a respectable showing in the closely contested race, polling 135 votes. Shortly thereafter, he joined family and friends in accompanying his peripatetic father on his final journey to the East. It was a difficult trip for the aging patriarch made worse by his son's continuing downward spiral. "William," he reported, "has been three times on his back & is not well at this time." Indeed, his condition had become a subject for polite gossip. In July, Sarah Mason in Philadelphia wrote to her sister Rosalie von Phul in St. Louis, "William is in very bad health, besides the attacks he had in the west, he was quite ill here & again at West Point. I think it may be owing to the fall he got before we left. I think too he is imprudent, he has a predisposition to something like vertigo & he pays no attention to his diet." 25

A recently discovered 1837 letter written by William Preston Clark in Philadelphia provides an unambiguous description of his condition:

I have never been in worse health, than since I left St. Louis or rather Louisville, no appetite, nightly fevers, a perfect and uninterrupted lassitude, which no exercise or excitement can dispel, taking medicine every night and morning, and feeling every day as if nothing in the world could afford me enjoyment. However I may now be writing under a depression of spirits. Bad weather and rainy withal is enough to give anybody the hippo. 26

The nightly fevers confirm the return of his malarial attacks, complicated by heavy drinking, which probably in turn contributed to his depression. He failed to improve, and when the elder Clark traveled to Warm Spring, Virginia, three months later, his son was too sick to accompany him. 27

Back in St. Louis as William's condition continued to deteriorate, relatives detected signs of psychosis. Early the next year, John O'Fallon reported that his cousin had lost his job as a clerk in the Indian Office and that the family was having difficulty finding someone willing to look after him. And then he raised the unthinkable: "I believe our only and ultimate recourse will be to send him to a lunatic asylum." Lest such an action reflect...
badly on the family, John proposed that they would have
to employ every other available means before resorting
to that drastic final step. It is a sure bet that no one had
dared suggest such a possibility to the elder William Clark
whose own declining health had forced him to move in
with Lewis and his wife Abby. 28

Even as William continued the pretense of intending
to commence the practice of law and lead a less erratic
life, close family members struggled to find a satisfactory
solution. They decided to dispatch him on a journey into
the mountains in the company of his brother George and
stepbrother John Radford with a hope that he would fare
better apart from the stresses of life in the hurly burly of
the frontier metropolis. Beyond that, they sensed that a
temporary separation from undesirable companions and
the temptations of familiar haunts might prove equally
beneficial. It was by no means a novel idea. Five years
earlier, William Henry Harrison, who later became a U.S.
President, had prevailed upon John O’Fallon to arrange
for sending his intemperate son Ben on a western trading
expedition. Sadly, in neither case did the scheme have the
desired effect. 29 If anything, Clark’s trip might actually
have worsened his condition. For western travelers
with malaria, the lower oxygen content of air in higher
elevations aggravated the damage caused by malarial
parasites to the red blood cells and frequently worsened
the disease’s symptoms. 30

Family members in Louisville discounted William’s
chances for recovery even before he returned from his
western travels. Clark Fitzhugh correctly predicted the
eventual outcome:

I was very sorry to learn that Wm Clark was in
such a deplorable situation. I did hope when I
heard of his trip to the mountains that there was
a chance of its being beneficial to him as it would
then be impossible for him to indulge his tastes for
dissipation but his desperate condition precludes
all hopes of his recovery. It should be a warning
to those “young men about town” who enter with
such a gusto on the to me very equivocal pleasures
of dissipation that a day of reckoning is to come. 31

The situation remained unresolved when the elder
Clark drew his last breath on September 1, 1838, but
William Preston Clark’s appointment two weeks later
as a trustee for Kemper College in St. Louis offered
renewed reason for hope. 32 In October, he was fit enough
to affix his usual bold signature to a document in which
he declined to act as an executor for his late father’s estate.
With that action he, perhaps unknowingly, handed his
fate over to his brothers Lewis and George. They bore

William Preston Clark’s estate inventory lists the titles of more than
700 books. The titles on the page shown above convey a sense of the
size and scope of his collection. The list includes:
1 volume Rush’s Memorandum by Richard Rush
1 volume Wonderful Characters by Henry Wilson
1 volume Nicholas Nickleby by Charles Dickens
1 volume Marbois Louisianae by François Barbé-Marbois
1 volume Gay Mannerings by Sir Walter Scott
1 volume Paris and Parisians by Frances Trollope
1 volume Spurzheims Anatomy by Johann Spurzheim
1 volume Spurzheims Insanity by Johann Spurzheim
1 volume Spurzheims Physiognomy by Johann Spurzheim
1 volume Spurzheims Phrenology by Johann Spurzheim
1 volume Bottas Italy by Carlo Botta
2 volumes Memoirs DeGenlis by Stéphanie comtess de Genlis
1 volume Chipmans Government by Nathaniel Chipman
3 volumes Curiosities of Literature by Isaac Disraeli
1 volume Polish Revolution by Joseph Hordynski

a heavy responsibility, and 150 years later the wisdom
and justice of their decisions remain open to debate. This
much seems certain: their deceased father likely would
not have been pleased with their eventual actions. 33

There is no doubt that William Preston was drinking
heavily. On January 7, 1839, James Kennerly wrote
in his diary, “William Clark had three fits today. Tried
to prevail on him to stay at our house.” After William
moved in with the Kennerlys, James recorded William’s
comings and goings and commented on his condition
with mentions of intoxication and being “taken sick with
fits as usual.” 34 These episodes probably were related to
his chronic alcoholism. Kennerly even mentioned going
to town to secure liquor for William. When actor Matthew Field paid “poor William” a visit in April of 1839, the sorrowful entry in his diary depicted the classic symptoms of someone with advanced alcoholism: “He drains the poison bowl—Drains and fills again, and Drains, paralyses his [mind?], and unthrones his reason, passion has become mania and destruction seems the sole object of his existence—Again—Again the unblest goblet goes to his lips, till sensation can no longer feel the fire, and madness finds repose in lethargy.” Field attributed Clark’s unhappy state and excessive drinking to “blighted love.”

In March of 1839, Meriwether Lewis Clark went to court requesting that he be named guardian for his 27-year-old brother. It marked the first step in his effort to have his younger sibling committed to an asylum. By any measure that was a drastic action. It was common practice for family members to care for their mentally ill relatives at home. Placement in an asylum, almshouse or jail was justified only for incurable individuals who pose a threat to society. William undeniably was a man in distress, but no one ever suggested that he had been violent. Moreover, the lucidity of his letters from this period suggests that any psychotic episodes were intermittent. Lewis Clark did produce an affidavit from Dr. William Beaumont, one of St. Louis’s most prominent physicians, stating that to the best of his judgment William Preston Clark was “of unsound mind & incapable of conducting his own affairs.”

That was sufficient for Henry Chouteau, Clerk of the Court, to order the sheriff to bring the defendant into court on March 19, 1839, to respond to the charges. The case was carried over when Lewis declared that his brother was too ill to attend. A hearing was scheduled the following June, and when the defendant finally appeared, a jury considered the evidence and ruled that he was of unsound mind. The judge named Meriwether Lewis Clark as his guardian.

Whatever his state of mind, William Preston Clark’s inheritance from his father’s estate had made him a wealthy man, and it seems entirely possible that concerns about his fortune may have prompted the family to act expeditiously. A preliminary inventory of William’s holdings placed his net worth at approximately $100,000, a tidy sum in 1839. In a day when financial disputes often took years to resolve, Lewis Clark appears to have moved with undue haste in seeking the court’s permission to dispose of some of his brother’s assets. In an effort to safeguard William’s interests, the court prudently ordered Lewis to post a $200,000 bond. William’s prodigal older brother was by some accounts a spendthrift who already had gone through much of his equally sizable inheritance. The often envious and meddlesome John O’Fallon was not above speculating about the designs of the individual Clark sons on the family fortune. Sibling rivalry and greed aside, Lewis Clark’s predicament was not an enviable one, and it would be unwise to rush to judgment about the propriety of his actions absent a more definitive assessment of his brother’s true state.

With the court’s authorization, the Clark family
Know all Men by these presents that I Meriwether Lewis Clark as principal and George R H Clark and Samuel B Churchill— as securities are held and firmly bound unto the State of Missouri in the just and full sum of Two hundred thousand dollars lawful money of the United States, for the payment whereof well and truly to be made we bind ourselves, our heirs, executors and administrators firmly by these presents—Sealed with our seals and dated at the City of St Louis in the State of Missouri, this Seventeenth day of June—One thousand Eight hundred and thirty nine.

The condition of the above obligation is such that whereas the County Court for the County of St Louis in the State of Missouri at the June term thereof in the year One thousand Eight hundred and thirty nine appointed Meriwether L Clark aforesaid Guardian of William Preston Clark—a person of unsound mind of the age of about Twenty Eight—years, now if the said Meriwether L Clark shall take due and proper care of said William P Clark and manage and administer his estate and effects to the best advantage according to law, and shall faithfully do and perform all such other acts matters and things touching his guardianship as may be prescribed by law or enjoined on him by the order, sentence or decree of any court of competent jurisdiction then this obligation to be void otherwise to remain in full force and virtue.

M. Lewis Clark
George R. H. Clark
Samuel B. Churchill

The reverse side of the document contains the following:

752
William Preston Clark
Bond $200,000
Filed 17th June 1839
Henry Chouteau Clark

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arranged for William's placement in the Lunatic Asylum in Lexington, Kentucky. The institution, opened in 1824, was the first mental institution west of the Appalachians. The unique facility provided only the most basic kind of custodial care, and there were no physicians on its staff. Conditions were far from ideal, and inmates were sometimes restrained with straight jackets, leather cuffs and chains. While it may have been the only such facility available to the family, it could not have been a happy place for poor William.

Family members apparently had second thoughts. Nine months later, John O'Fallon, who had been the first to suggest William's committal, reported that Lewis and Abby were planning a trip to Kentucky to relieve William from confinement at the "Lunatic Asylum." Never shy about expressing an opinion, O'Fallon conjectured: "I have no idea that he will continue sane longer than two months unless he will be contented to reside in the country." After arranging for his brother's return to St. Louis, Lewis Clark requested a new sanity hearing, and on April 2, 1840, a St. Louis jury hastily reversed the previous ruling with a finding that "William Preston Clark has been restored to his right mind." It proved to be an act of mercy that allowed William Clark's long-suffering second son to die in peace barely six weeks later. None of his brothers were present, but the end came quickly. Samuel Churchill gave the following account of William's final hours:

Our friend & relative William Clark died suddenly about two o'clock yesterday [May 16, 1840]. A short time before his death he was in his usual state of health, but was carried off in a few minutes by one of those attacks to which he had been subject. Dr. Ruthkawski left him for a short time and whilst setting in the next room heard a slight noise in William's, and on entering his chamber found him about to breathe his last. Poor William had a warm, generous & noble heart, but as you know he has for a long time been the victim of a disease of which it is melancholy to think.

Those recurring attacks were probably epileptic seizures caused either by cerebral malaria or brain damage from chronic alcoholism. In the final analysis, there likely was no single culprit. Tragically, the introspective William appears to have searched in vain for explanations for his unhappy fate. Among the works in his library were four volumes by Dr. Johann Spurzheim, a German physician and pioneer in studies of the brain. These works were not standard fare in private libraries, and two of Spurzheim's titles seem uniquely apropos to William's condition:

Observations on the Deranged Manifestations of the Mind, or Insanity and the Anatomy of the Brain. Also on his bookshelf were Mason Weems's The Drunkard's Looking Glass and John Mason's Self Knowledge, along with books on phrenology.

An obituary in the Missouri Argus listed apoplexy, likely a sudden cerebral hemorrhage due to softening of the brain from the damage of both the alcohol and the malaria, as the cause of William's death. William Preston Clark was only 29 years old when he was laid to rest near his father in the burial vault at John O'Fallon's estate following a funeral service at the home of his brother Lewis. It was a sad day, but William's ordeal had ended and so too had his family's.

William E. Foley is an LCTHF member and retired history professor (University of Central Missouri). He currently serves as general editor of the Missouri Biography Series for the University of Missouri Press. His most recent book, Wilderness Journey: The Life of William Clark, was published in 2004. He resides in Warrensburg, Missouri, and is working on a biography of General James Wilkinson. The author wishes to thank Jay Buckley, Jim Holmberg, Lanny Jones, Bud Clark, Ken Winn, Michael Everman, Thomas Danisi and Dr. Thomas Hall, M.D., for their advice and assistance.

Notes
1 William Clark to George Rogers Hancock Clark, December 2, 1832, in George Rogers Hancock Clark Papers, Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis [hereafter MHS].
2 William Radford to William Clark, July 29, 1838, William Clark Papers, MHS.
3 Current medical evidence strongly supports a genetic component to alcoholism. The gene or genes that rendered George Rogers Clark and his nephew William Preston Clark unable to regulate their alcoholic intake appear to have been suppressed in William Clark. The author is grateful to Thomas B. Hall, M.D. for reviewing the medical aspects of this essay. Dr. Hall, a member of the faculty at the University of Kansas School of Medicine with a specialty in psychiatry, is also President of the Friends of Arrow Rock, Missouri. Dr. Hall has studied and written about Dr. John Sappington, a pioneer in the treatment of malaria and a resident of Arrow Rock.
4 Some accounts have attributed Meriwether Lewis's suicide to the ill effects of malaria or ague. For more about malaria's symptoms and for opposing viewpoints on the subject of Lewis and malaria see Thomas Danisi, "The 'Ague' Made Him Do It," in We Proceeded On, Vol. 28, No. 1 (February 2002), pp. 10-15; and Ronald V. Loge, "Meriwether Lewis and Malaria," We Proceeded On, Vol. 28, No. 2 (May 2002), pp. 33-35.


William Preston Clark to William Clark, August 3, [1831], William Clark Papers, MHS.

William Clark to George Rogers Hancock Clark, April 28, 1828, in GRHC Papers, MHS, and Appraisement and Inventory of William Preston Clark deceased, August 17, 1840, St. Louis Probate Records, St. Louis, Missouri.


Writing from Auburn, New York, where William was attending classes, John Rudd reported to a friend in St. Louis: "William Clark and the two Bertholds are still here & doing very well, except that Clark is too much like a good many, fond of company, but when diligent does extremely well." Rudd to Christopher Kenney, March 28, 1827, Stephen Hemstead Collection, MHS.

William Clark to Meriwether Lewis Clark, September 10, 1826; April 27, and December 10, 1827, and May 18, 1828, MLC Papers, MHS; and William Clark to George Rogers Hancock Clark, January 13, February 14, March 9, April 28, and July 6, 1828, in GRHC Papers, MHS.

William Preston Clark to George Rogers Hancock Clark, January 9, 1833, GRHC Papers, MHS, and William Clark to Meriwether Lewis Clark, January 28, 1830, MLC Papers, MHS, and Jones, *Shaping of the West*, p. 303.


Meriwether Lewis Clark to William Clark, February 16, 1830, in MLC Papers, MHS, and William Preston Clark to William Clark, August 3, [1831], in William Clark Papers, MHS.

William Preston Clark to George Rogers Hancock Clark, December 14, 1831, GRHC Papers, MHS, and William Clark to George Rogers Hancock Clark, July 30, and August 19, 1832, GRHC Papers, MHS.

William Preston Clark to George Rogers Hancock Clark, December 3, 1832, and January 9, and February 27, 1833, in GRHC Papers, MHS.

William Preston Clark, deceased, Appraisement and Inventory, August 17, 1840, St. Louis Probate Court Records.
AMERICAN INDIAN FLAGS
AND THE L&C BICENTENNIAL

The Corps of Discovery presented flags to Indians they met along their journey, but today, those tribes proudly fly flags of their own

This article was first presented as a paper at the 22nd International Congress of Vexillology (flag studies) in August 2007 in Berlin, Germany.

BY EDWARD B. KAYE

In the early 1800s, the United States was a very young country, occupying just the eastern coast of North America. France, Great Britain, Spain and Russia all made territorial claims on and occupied parts of the continent. President Thomas Jefferson envisioned the expansion of the United States to the western coast. His administration purchased the Louisiana Territory in 1803, doubling the size of the country. He then sent his personal secretary, Meriwether Lewis, and Lewis’s former army commander, William Clark, on an expedition to explore the territory and seek a water-based route across the continent.

From May 1804 to September 1806, Lewis and Clark led a military corps up the Missouri River, across the Rocky Mountains and down the Columbia River to the Pacific Ocean, and back. Their “Corps of Discovery” traveled more than 8,000 miles through the homelands of more than 50 modern-day Indian tribes, through the newly acquired Louisiana Purchase and into Oregon Country. The Lewis and Clark Expedition was the first Euro-American party to cross the present United States, map its travels, collect scientific specimens, and record detailed observations of the land and its native people. It traversed what would become 11 of the current 50 states. Lewis and Clark’s journey became one of the most important chapters in the early history of the United States, and opened up the West to conquest and settlement.

Two hundred years later, the country commemorated the Lewis and Clark Expedition with a multi-year series of events, exhibitions, books, monumental art, park dedications and educational opportunities. Nearly all of today’s “encounter tribes,” which represent the 100 tribal nations recorded by Lewis and Clark, participated in the bicentennial, seeing it as an opportunity to tell their side of the story. A few, viewing the expedition as the beginning of the end of their way of life, avoided the commemoration.

TRIBAL FLAGS AND THE BICENTENNIAL

While 200 years ago none of those encounter tribes had flags of their own, today nearly all have flags. President Jefferson’s detailed instructions to the captains described the tribes as “nations,” and indeed current U.S. government policy requires states and federal agencies to deal with tribes on a nation-to-nation basis. Along with federal laws allowing operation of gambling casinos, this has spurred tribal flag adoption over the past 25 years. Several tribal flags were adopted specifically in anticipation of the bicentennial.¹

From January 2003 to September 2006, the national Lewis and Clark Bicentennial comprised thousands of events across the country. Nearly every community along the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail and many sites throughout the Eastern Legacy held some form of commemorative event. Additionally, there were 15 national “Signature Events.” Every trail state had a substantial organizing group. Several federal agencies sponsored significant participation including the U.S.
Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the Army Corps of Engineers and the National Park Service. Other agencies also participated, including the Army National Guard, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and the U.S. Mint, which featured the return of the expedition to St. Louis on the Mississippi riverbank in front of the famous Gateway Arch. The St. Louis city flag was replaced on the main flagpole by the flag of the Osage Nation, in whose traditional homeland the events took place. Again, tribal representatives carried their flags, marching in under the arch and forming a line in front of the crowd with flags flying in the breeze.

TRIBAL FLAGS

The following encounter tribe flags appeared in the November 2005 events. They represent tribes currently on the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail and others with a historical connection. Tribes from the Eastern Legacy portion of the trail, from Virginia and Pennsylvania to Illinois, are not represented. Since many tribes no longer live in their native homelands, having been relocated to reservations, a geographic sequencing is difficult. Therefore, the tribes and their flags are displayed alphabetically:

The flags had special meaning: they showed how the Indian side of the story was heard, respected and included in the bicentennial. They provided a meaningful symbol of belonging to members of the participating tribes. No matter that none existed at the time of the expedition, today the flags herald a new way of viewing the history of our country.

Edward B. (Ted) Kaye is editor of Raven, the scholarly journal of the North American Vexillological Association, dedicated to flag studies. He led Lewis and Clark Bicentennial efforts in Oregon from 1996 to 2002, and now serves as secretary of the foundation’s Oregon Chapter. He coordinated state and tribal flag displays for Oregon’s major bicentennial events.

NOTES

1 In recent years, dozens of tribes have been encouraged to adopt flags by the efforts of Peter Orenski—owner of TME Co., which specializes in the manufacture and sale of lapel pin flags and other flag merchandise—and the seminal work of Don Healy, “Flags of the Native People of the United States,” first published by the North American Vexillological Association in 1997.

2 Peter Orenski graciously provided most of the flag images used in this article. See www.tmealf.com.

May 2008 We Proceeded On — 21
Absentee Shawnee Tribe
Oklahoma

Blackfeet Nation
Browning, Montana

Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe
Eagle Butte, South Dakota

Coeur D'Alene Tribe
Plummer, Idaho

Comanche Nation
Lawton, Oklahoma

Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians
Oregon

Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla
Indian Reservation
Pendleton, Oregon

Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation
Warm Springs, Oregon

Crow Nation
Crow Agency, Montana

Eastern Shawnee Tribe
Oklahoma

Iowa Tribe of Kansas & Nebraska
White Cloud, Kansas

Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma
Oklahoma

Kalispel (Pend D'Oreille)
Washington

We Proceeded On May 2008
AUTHENTICATING CLARK’S SIGNATURE

An update on the “William Clark” inscription found in Richard Kirwan’s “Elements of Mineralogy”

BY JOHN W. JENGO, PG

A n article by the author in the August 2003 issue of WPO described the discovery of a “William Clark” inscription in Volume I of Richard Kirwan’s second edition of Elements of Mineralogy. Kirwan’s two-volume set is believed to be the only geology and mineralogy reference material brought on the Lewis and Clark Expedition. Meriwether Lewis had acquired this edition of Elements of Mineralogy in Philadelphia when he was purchasing supplies for the expedition, probably on the recommendation of Thomas Jefferson or Benjamin Smith Barton. I had no expectation of potentially encountering one of the volumes the captains had carried on the expedition when I visited the Special Collections and University Archives of the Rutgers University Library in 2002 to do research on the geological education of Lewis and the geological observations in Lewis and Clark’s journals.

Upon opening the Special Collections’ copy of Elements of Mineralogy, Volume I, I immediately noted a “William Clark” inscription on the flyleaf (Figure 1). I was intrigued by this potential historical discovery, but possessed no experience in identifying Clark’s handwriting. I subsequently contacted James Holmberg of The Filson Society and Dr. Gary Moulton of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, editor of the definitive version of the journals, to ask for their learned opinion. Both scholars thought the signature varied in several aspects from writing known to be in Clark’s hand, but they recommended that it was worthy of further investigation.

The first step was to research the provenance of the book to determine if there was any possible familial connection to William Clark. It can be difficult to trace the provenance of donated books, but fortunately, this volume of Elements of Mineralogy proved to be the exception. It was donated to Rutgers College in November 1903, along with about 700 other titles, from the estate of a Rutgers College chemistry and mineralogy professor, Albert Huntington Chester. I determined that there was no family connection between Chester and William Clark, and surmised that Chester probably had obtained the book as a useful reference in his vocation as a practicing mining engineer and the author of several mineralogical works.

In deciding how to ascertain the origin and authenticity of the signature, I was mindful of whether the volumes of Elements of Mineralogy that Lewis and Clark brought on the expedition were still extant. Elements of Mineralogy was a very well-known book and “was in the knapsacks of the majority of American field mineralogists in the early nineteenth century.” Therefore, it has not been difficult to find these volumes in libraries across the country. The captains could have possessed any one of these books because it is not known how they dispensed with their reference library upon returning home. One commonly held scenario has the books being sold when
Lewis and Clark auctioned off the remnants of their expedition supplies. However, I would contend that the captains kept these important reference books as a critical aid for developing the scientific report that was to be published following the expedition’s return.

That hypothesis suggests that the expedition’s copy of *Elements of Mineralogy* could have had a similar accession path as the minerals collected on the expedition, a history that I detailed in an article published in the August 2005 issue of *Po.*

In that article, I postulated that the post-April 1805 mineral specimens collected by the captains may have been included in a post-expedition shipment to Philadelphia because artist, naturalist and museum keeper Charles Willson Peale mentioned “some minerals &c.” were part of a shipment of effects Lewis sent via New Orleans in 1809. Given that Peale listed “A number of Minerals &c.” in the December 1809 summary of Lewis and Clark accessions in his Memoranda of the Philadelphia Museum folio, I thought it was possible that the *Elements of Mineralogy* volumes also could have been donated to Peale by William Clark after Lewis’s demise. If such a donation took place, it most likely would have occurred during Clark’s visit to Philadelphia in January 1810. He mentioned finding during that visit “a few Minerals” in his search “for the Materials left in this City by the late Govr. Lewis, relative to our discoveries on the Western Tour.” If Peale had written Clark’s name in the *Elements of Mineralogy* volume to document its donation source, it would then be worthwhile exercise to attempt a comparison of this signature to Peale’s authenticated handwriting.

The ideal source for Peale’s handwriting is the *Memoranda of the Philadelphia Museum* folio housed at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, because it contains more than 100 pages of hand-written accession records related to Peale’s natural history museum. Fortunately for my comparative analyses, there are five instances where Peale had written out the name “William Clark” and seven more instances where he entered just the name “Clark” (three of these entries referring to William Clark, and the other four referencing a Peter Clark, Edward Clark, James Clark and Daniel Clark). Figure 2 presents the *Elements of Mineralogy* signature and the five different “William Clark” inscriptions in Peale’s hand; Figure 3 illustrates the seven additional “Clark” inscriptions in Peale’s hand that are found throughout the *Memoranda* folio.

The Peale inscriptions in the *Memoranda* folio bear a much closer resemblance to the *Elements of Mineralogy* signature than any of William Clark’s own signatures that I have evaluated over the last several years. For instance, on Figure 2, note the conspicuous similarities in the “William” inscriptions, particularly the hook at the end of the “W” and its flow into the “i” in the latter *Memoranda* inscriptions (p. 49 and p. 100), the nearly identical position of the superscript dots over the two “i” on the *Memoranda* (p. 43) inscription, the tightly looped “l,” the open-topped counter of the “a” and the sharp corners (instead of arches) of the “m.”
Comparison of the Elements of Mineralogy signature to Peale’s Memoranda “Clark” inscriptions in Figure 2 and Figure 3 indicate some correspondence in the upstroke and downstroke flourish of the stand-alone “C” and the size of the open loop of the “I.” In Figure 3, also note the same aforementioned similarities, and the virtually identical hooks of the “a” of the Elements of Mineralogy signature and the Memoranda (p. 44) inscription and the resemblance of how the end of the unusual v-shaped “r” sweeps upward into the top of the “k.” Some differences between the signature and Peale’s inscriptions remain, most notably how the “m” in “William” and the “k” in “Clark” trail off in the Elements of Mineralogy signature. I would suggest that this may have been a consequence of the signature being a stand-alone

line versus the “William Clark” and “Clark” inscriptions in the Memoranda being incorporated into sentences. Overall, the similarities, including the thready stroke, the thickness of the lines, the consistency of flourishes, the uniform size, height, slant and shape of the letters, and their adherence to the baseline, far outweigh the differences and open up the possibility that this Elements of Mineralogy volume is the same book that was carried to the Pacific Ocean and back by the captains.

In assessing the scenarios that would indicate the Elements of Mineralogy signature was not authentic, none seem very probable. For example, if the signature is recent (even though it does not appear to have been inked by a modern pen), someone would have to have known of the book’s connection with the Lewis and Clark Expedition, which only became evident in 1959 after Donald Jackson published “Some Books Carried by Lewis and Clark” in the Missouri Historical Society Bulletin. Because this Elements of Mineralogy volume was already in the Rutgers Special Collections by that time, this scenario would require the signature to have been inscribed while someone was reviewing the book in the university archives sometime between 1959 and 2002 (when I first encountered the book), which is unlikely.

If the signature was inscribed during Professor Chester’s ownership of the volume or prior to that, this would still require the knowledge that Elements of Mineralogy was connected to the expedition, yet this relationship was not revealed in the Nicholas Biddle (1814) or Elliott Coues (1893) editions of the journals, the only sources available on the expedition prior to 1903.

The only other possibility would require an astonishing coincidence: that before coming into Professor Chester’s collection, the prior owner of the book was a man...
named William Clark. Given the signature’s similarities to Peale’s handwriting, this prior owner very well could have been our William Clark. I would propose that if the signature is Charles Willson Peale’s, he inscribed the book on behalf of its donor, William Clark, making the Elements of Mineralogy volume presently held by Rutgers University one of the few remaining genuine artifacts from the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

John Jengo, a member of the Philadelphia Chapter, is a professional geologist who currently works for an environmental consulting firm in Pennsylvania. His last Lewis and Clark geology article, published in the August 2007 issue of WPO, discussed the scientific influence of Lewis and Clark’s geological discoveries published in the Biddle edition of the journals. He would appreciate any input from Lewis and Clark experts and aficionados regarding the authenticity of this signature. He can be reached at rockman@erols.com.

Notes

5 Albert Huntington Chester Papers, 1875 to 1903. Special Collections and University Archives, Rutgers University Libraries, New Brunswick, New Jersey.
10 Charles Willson Peale, Memoranda of the Philadelphia Museum, 1804-1841, The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, p. 45. Peale had recorded the “Donated Louisiana Territory Specimens—First Shipment” in his museum accession book as being “presented by Mr. Jefferson” (making no mention of Lewis or Clark; see Memoranda, p. 5) and it’s apparent that he was not the recipient of the “Fort Mandan Specimens—Second Shipment” (those specimens went to the American Philosophical Society) so the supposition is that rocks and minerals collected after April 1805 are the specimens Peale is referring to in his December 1809 summary list of Lewis and Clark accessions (pp. 43-45).
The foundation recently lost two longtime members and loyal supporters in Charles Christopher Patton of Springfield, Illinois, and Irene Smith of Glasgow, Montana. Both were active participants in foundation meetings in the 1980s and 1990s and remained supportive of our programs and projects. Friends throughout the foundation will miss them both.

Patton, 92, died February 15, 2008, at St. John's Hospice in Springfield. He was born January 6, 1916, in Springfield, the son of Dr. Charles Lanphier Patton and Alice Agee Jess Patton. He was preceded in death by three brothers, Dr. Robert Jess Patton, James William Patton II and John Agee Patton.

Chris, as friends in the foundation knew him, was a graduate of Springfield High School and earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in electrical engineering from the University of Michigan. He served in the U.S. Navy from 1942 to 1946, where he was involved in convoy duty and anti-submarine warfare. He retired from Sangamo Electric Co. as an electrical engineer.

Patton was a member of First Presbyterian Church and served on the boards of the Sangamon County Historical Society and the Abraham Lincoln Association. He was an ardent sailor at Island Bay Yacht Club, where he raced and served on the race committee and was national champion crew on Rebel Class Sailboats many times. He compiled a five-volume manuscript on his grandfather Charles H. Lanphier's letters titled, "Glory to God and the Sucker Democracy."

He is survived by his nephews, James W. III, Thomas, Jeffrey and Stephen Patton, all of Springfield, and Charles Patton of Phoenix; nieces, Penelope P. Gordon of Sutters Bay, Michigan, and Ann P. Meyers of McMurray, Pennsylvania; and several great-nieces and -nephews and great-great-nieces and -nephews.

Patton was a former member of the foundation's board of directors. He remained active in the foundation, frequently communicating with staff in the Great Falls office, and was a very generous donor to our programs, projects and operations.

Memorials may be made to the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, P.O. Box 3434, Great Falls, MT 59403; or First Presbyterian Church, 321 S. Seventh St., Springfield, IL 62701.

Smith, 93, died February 19, 2008. She was born August 18, 1914, in Julesburg, Colorado, to Howard O. and Emma (Ericsson) Wiggins. She graduated from high school in Julesburg and from Colorado Women's College in Denver.

She married Harold H. Smith on June 27, 1936, in Fort Morgan, Colorado. They worked in the newspaper industry in Fort Morgan; Ogallala, Nebraska; Mill Valley, California; and in Jerome, Pocatello and Blackfoot, Idaho. They also owned and operated a motel in Blackfoot. The Smiths owned the Glasgow Publishing Co., which included the Glasgow Courier, from 1964 to 1972.

Smith was active in the First Methodist Church, St. Matthew's Episcopal Church and PEO. Music was an important part of her life. She played piano and organ for many groups and churches, and enjoyed playing bridge and reading.

She was a charter member of the foundation's Valley County Chapter.

For more than three decades she attended the foundation's annual meetings and visited sites along the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail. Annual meetings often included a party for Smith, who shared her birthday with Meriwether Lewis. She helped plan the 1979 annual meeting in Glasgow and attended every annual meeting after that until her health began to fail. She remained involved in the foundation, and friends read and tutored third-grade students in Glasgow. She died in 1979. She is survived by three sons; Brad and his wife, Stephanie, of Florence, Oregon; Spencer and his wife, Cherri, of Eau Claire, Wisconsin; and Barry and his wife, Judy, of Silver Spring, Maryland; four grandchildren and a cousin.

Deed signed by Lewis and Clark fails to earn minimum bid in Sotheby's auction

The St. Louis Post-Dispatch was among newspapers that recently ran an article announcing that a Lewis and Clark document would be sold at Sotheby's auction house in New York City.

Seven weeks before he died, Meriwether Lewis sold land in present-day Florissant, Missouri, to prominent fur trader Pierre Chouteau, St.

The document outlining the sale, dated August 23, 1809, was signed by William Clark, who served as a witness. The deed shows that Chouteau agreed to buy several parcels from Lewis at or near the village of St. Ferdinand, an old name for the farm settlement that eventually became Florissant. Chouteau bought the land from Lewis for $4,355 (including some parcels Lewis had purchased from Chouteau only the previous year).

Documents bearing the signatures of both Lewis and Clark are rare outside of the official reports from their expedition to the Pacific Northwest.
The deed was one of numerous historical documents listed for sale by the trust of Dr. Robert Small, a physician and collector in New York.

Sotheby's estimated the document's value at $80,000 to $120,000. The document was withdrawn from the auction April 3 when the high bid of $60,000 failed to meet Small's undisclosed minimum requirement.

Foundation introduces youth publication
The foundation has taken steps over the years to appeal to younger audiences with its Camp Pomp and Teen Adventure Camp at the annual meeting, through its Memorandum of Understanding with the Boy Scouts of America, and its Lewis and Clark Challenge program.

For the first time, we are dedicating an entire publication to communicating with a younger audience. The first two issues of Seaman Says were inserted into the January and April issues of The Orderly Report. We plan to dedicate distribution of future Seaman Says issues directly to young readers.

We are posting the newsletter on our Web site on the “Kid's Page” and will be distributing it at several interpretive centers along the trail. Seaman Says includes articles about youth who are actively pursuing interests related to the Lewis and Clark Expedition, the people they met, places they visited and the trail they traveled. It also features word games, puzzles, contests, recipes and information on current events along the trail. Feature articles will examine members of the expedition, tribes they met, plants and animals they identified, challenges they faced, and places they visited along the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail.

Our talented youth editor, Claire Powell, is accepting suggestions for other distribution methods at landckids@gmail.com. If you have suggestions for topics you would like to see covered in Seaman Says, let Claire know.

We have plans for developing and improving the youth publication, but because we have limited funding, we are counting on our members to help us introduce it to a wide audience. Please share your copy with a child, teenager or educator who might be interested. Make extra copies to share with a class or youth organization. Encourage adults and children to view it on our Web site.

We are looking for sponsors to help us distribute the publication to schools and youth organizations. If you have sponsor suggestions, please contact Publications Editor Wendy Raney at wraney@lewisandclark.org.

This is our first step in communicating with the next generation of Lewis and Clark enthusiasts. We are counting on our members to help us make it a success.

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• Significant events on the Lewis & Clark Trail.
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MICHAEL HAYNES

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William Clark
Indian Diplomat
By Jay H. Buckley
For three decades following the expedition with Meriwether Lewis for which he is best known, William Clark forged a meritorious public career that contributed even more to the opening of the West: from 1807 to 1838, he served as the U.S. government’s most important representative to western Indians. William Clark: Indian Diplomat focuses on Clark’s tenure as Indian agent, territorial governor, and Superintendent of Indian Affairs at St. Louis.

$29.95 CLOTH • 978-0-8061-3911-1 • 320 PAGES
New Clark biography studies his post-expedition career in Indian affairs

William Clark: Indian Diplomat
Jay H. Buckley
University of Oklahoma Press
320 pages/$29.95 hardcover

The bicentennial of the Lewis and Clark Expedition has resulted in an abundance of titles about this American “Odyssey,” as Stephen Ambrose referred to it. One’s bookshelves sag under the weight of all the titles produced—some good, some bad, some middling. The Corps of Discovery certainly has its “stars,” who get the majority of attention. This is in large part due to their roles on the expedition and available source materials. Meriwether Lewis, William Clark, York, Sacagawea, George Drouillard, John Colter and even Seaman all have been the subject of books. Strangely enough, however, while Lewis received attention and biographical treatment prior to the bicentennial, co-leader Clark received only limited attention. One can speculate that Lewis was the more interesting, and certainly the more tragic, of the two captains, and therefore a more intriguing subject for writers; the solid Clark lacked the spark to ignite such attention. Serious students of the expedition and its members of course know this is not the case.

William Clark led a life not only full of accomplishment, but also of excitement and tragedy. It was only a matter of time before historians focused on the man and wrote good solid biographies about him. Two good ones were published during the bicentennial. These recent studies of Clark by Landon Jones and William Feoley cover much of the same ground but approach their subject from different perspectives. As good as these were, there was still room for deeper study of the man and aspects of his career, including his career in Indian affairs. Jay Buckley has given us that study in his William Clark: Indian Diplomat.

William Clark was the primary federal Indian agent and superintendent for the West for 30 years. In Indian Diplomat, Buckley thoroughly covers Clark’s career in that capacity. His early life and career and his expedition experience are covered in an appropriately abbreviated manner given the focus of the book. The bulk of the narrative traces Clark’s post-expedition career and the significant role he played for three decades in United States Indian affairs.

Well written and researched, Buckley’s book presents a detailed account of Clark’s important role in the conduct of Western Indian affairs from 1808 to 1838. During that tenure, Clark negotiated numerous treaties with tribes resulting in land cessions totaling millions of acres. He also helped implement and supervise the removal of eastern, Mississippi Valley and lower Missouri Valley tribes farther west. In the course of what was sometimes a distasteful and distressing job, Clark sought to help the Indians cared for his native charges and tried to do the best by them that he could (shades of his attitude toward his enslaved African Americans—business must be done and one’s lot in life/fate accepted).

Buckley notes, and backs up with research, Clark’s interest in and
appreciation for Indians and their culture. He considered them enemies and troublemakers when necessary, but he still had sympathy for them and their beleaguered and disappearing way of life that many Americans of the period did not. That perspective boded well for the native people under his charge as agent and superintendent. While Clark negotiated treaty after treaty that dispossessed them and adversely impacted both their culture and freedom, he did what he could for them. Clark had a good eye for a bargain and wasn’t always averse to getting one at the expense of his charges, but he knew (correctly) that the Indian faced the inevitable—dispossession and decline—and he strove to soften the ugly reality. This meant always moving tribes farther west, controlling trade, providing agents to help acculturate the Indians into Euro-American farming culture, implementing improved government policy and gradually moving them toward assimilation rather than extinction.

It is likely that in his position, Clark did more to help the American Indian and was more sympathetic toward them than any other government official of the period. The proverbial handwriting was on the wall as to the Indians’ eventual fate and Clark did what he could to try to make it as positive a fate as possible.

Jay Buckley has made an important contribution to our knowledge of William Clark, Indian affairs of that period and the American West. It is a book that no Lewis and Clark library should be without. Get it and add a little more sag to your bookshelves.

—James J. Holmberg
The Filson Historical Society
In 1968, President Lyndon Johnson signed the National Trails System Act calling for a system of national scenic and recreation trails. The Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail was established in 1978, when the national historic trail designation was added to the act. In adding historic trails, Congress created a system that would link our nation's heritage and places of scenic beauty into a nationwide network available for all Americans to appreciate and enjoy.

However, the act came with a revolutionary proviso—responsibility for this endeavor would not rest exclusively with the federal government. The other side of the equation included state agencies and a vast system of volunteers who would help build, maintain, preserve and interpret the heritage of these trails.

The act authorized limited funds to protect and administer the national trails system, but Congress was slow to appropriate these funds, so trail enthusiasts organized formal and quasi-formal groups for each of the national trails to advocate for funding, and did much of the work to construct and preserve them.

In 1991, representatives from 17 volunteer trail support groups united to organize what became the Partnership for the National Trails System (PNTS), knitting together a coalition specifically to advocate for funding to complete the trails that had been created by the act. More recently, the PNTS has facilitated meetings with congressional leaders and key federal agency personnel. It also has conducted workshops to help its member organizations develop their human and financial resources. The Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation is a member organization of the PNTS.

Wendy Raney, LCTHF publications editor and director of field operations, has served on the PNTS Leadership Council since 2004. She served three years on its Executive Committee and currently is serving a three-year term on its board of directors.

As a result of this combined effort, congressional funding has increased four-fold, and there is now at least one federal employee overseeing the administration and development of each national trail. There are currently eight national scenic and 17 national historic trails in 47 of the 50 states.

Nearly 40 years after the signing of the National Trails System Act, only two of the national scenic trails exist in their entirety—the Appalachian and Pacific Crest. The rest are about 60 percent complete, and nine of the trails don't even have federal land acquisition funding. Numerous historic sites and features remain unprotected along the national historic trails.

Perhaps Senator Frank Moss said it best in 1967 during hearings on the bill that led to passage of the act: "If these important features of our countryside are not marked and set aside for the edification and enjoyment of our people both now and in the years to come, some of their character and beauty may be lost or even obliterated entirely."

Decade for National Trails

In 2008, the PNTS and its member organizations are focusing national attention on Senator Moss's words by celebrating the 40th anniversary of the National Trails System Act and launching the "Decade For National Trails," an effort to secure public and private funding to complete all the national trails authorized prior to 1990.

To do this, the PNTS has hired a communications and special events coordinator who oversees the development and implementation of these and other suggested activities:

- Involve outdoor recreation, travel, hospitality, health and other industries that have a relationship to trails in celebrating the 40th anniversary and planning "Decade For National Trails" activities.
- Develop a traveling multi-media program that can be used at public events.
- Design and publish a poster depicting the national trails system that can be distributed at ranger stations, visitor centers, retail stores and partner venues and on the Internet.
• Promote projects with national youth and educational organizations to involve more young people in healthy activities on trails.

• Conduct a design competition and advocate for a national trails system 50th anniversary commemorative stamp series from the U.S. Postal Service.

• Solicit and develop articles about the national trails system, the PNTS and its partners in national publications, weekly print and the electronic media.

Individuals, corporations and foundations interested in learning more about the 40th anniversary and/or the “Decade for National Trails” are invited to contact PNTS Executive Director Gary Werner at (608) 249–7870.

---PNTS

Volunteer along the trail
www.lewisandclark.org/?p=whats_new

Participate in the Lewis and Clark Challenge
www.lewisandclark.org/?p=whats_new

Participate in activities of your local chapter
www.lewisandclark.org/?p=chapters&n=chapters

Attend the LCTHF 40th annual meeting
www.lewisandclark.org/?p=about_meetings&n=annual_meeting

Celebrate the National Trails System Act
40th Anniversary

• Thank your congressional representatives for supporting the national trails system

• Explore a national trail you’ve never visited

• Visit the Partnership for the National Trails System Web site event listings
  www.nationaltrailspartnership.org

• Donate time or money to the national scenic or historic trail of your choice

• Print a map of the national trails system and post it on your wall for others to see
  www.nationaltrailspartnership.org/map.asp
Fun, adventure and new scholarship on tap for 2008 annual meeting

Great Falls to host Lewis and Clark enthusiasts

BY WENDY RANEY

The Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail Interpretive Center sits above the shore of the Missouri River in Great Falls, Montana. It is home to the headquarters of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation. Annual meeting attendees will spend an afternoon at the center touring exhibits, visiting the headquarters office and Sherman Library and exploring the River's Edge Trail, shown above.

The foundation’s 40th annual meeting, August 10-13, 2008, offers members a unique opportunity to visit the foundation’s headquarters and peruse the William P. Sherman Library and Archives collections. The foundation moved to the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail Interpretive Center in May 2007 and staff enjoys a spectacular view of the Missouri River thanks to the generosity of the Forest Service staff, center volunteers and the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center Foundation.

"Using Maps as Metaphors: Tracing the Journey" offers a variety of perspectives on William Clark’s 1810 map and the influence of native cultures on nineteenth-century maps. Featured speakers include Jay Buckley, John Logan Allen, Jack Nisbet, George Horse Capture and Harry Fritz. Larry Epstein, Randy Gray and Fritz will debate “The Importance of Site Location: What is the Center of the L&C Universe.”

Local volunteers have planned several tours on the Missouri River, one to Fort Benton and Decision Point and one along the Portage Route, among others. The expedition spent more than a month in the Great Falls area and countless opportunities exist to “trace the journey.” Pre- and post-meeting tours will explore the White Cliffs region of the upper Missouri River, the Lolo Trail, and the Two Medicine Encounter Site and Camp Disappointment.

The foundation’s popular Camp Pomp is offered to kids ages six to 11. The camp includes a full day of discovery, studying the rocks, birds, fish, animals, plants and trees that Lewis and Clark recorded. They also will study the skills necessary to explore and live in the 1800s such as setting up a teepee, starting a fire, writing with quill pens and sewing a “possibles” pouch.

For the first time, the foundation is offering a program for 12- to 16-year-olds called the "Teen Outdoor Adventure Camp." Participants will enjoy their own tour of Fort Benton and a day of canoeing, biking, hiking and other activities.

The 40th annual meeting provides opportunities to explore the foundation’s past, enjoy the present and glimpse the future. Staff and local members invite you to visit the segment of trail we call home.

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Using Maps as Metaphors: Tracing the Journey

Using the maps of Lewis and Clark as metaphors for the many stories of the Trail and the Expedition, the Foundation's 40th Annual Meeting will trace the journeys of Lewis & Clark and the Native Americans they encountered. Presentations by Jay Buckley, John Logan Allen and Jack Nisbet will include latest research on William Clark's 1810 map, and the influence of native cultures on nineteenth century maps. George Horse Capture will trace the ancient journeys of native peoples into the Americas.

Join us at the Great Falls.
Register today.

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To learn more, please contact Carol Bronson by email: cbronson@lewisandclark.org or call toll-free: 888.701.3434.

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Keepers of the Story - Stewards of the Trail